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**JACK ANDERSON with LES WHITTEN****Govt. Guests And CIA**

CIA COVERUP: Former CIA chief John McCone now has acknowledged a story he denied to us more than four years ago.

In January, 1971, we reported that the CIA had recruited two underworld figures, Sam Giancana and John Roselli, to plan the assassination of Cuban Premier Fidel Castro.

He identified their CIA contacts as William Harvey and James "Big Jim" O'Connell. The CIA was put in touch with the underworld triggerman, we reported, by billionaire Howard Hughes' former Nevada honcho, Robert Maheu.

The plotters are now being hauled behind closed doors of the Select Senate Intelligence committee to tell what they know.

McCone emerged after three hours of secret testimony to admit cautiously to the press that plots, indeed had been sanctioned to kill Castro.

This was the opposite of what he told us in 1971. "No plot was authorized or implemented" to assassinate Castro, he told us. We went ahead with the story anyway, and now McCone has acknowledged we were right.

"The plot to knock off Castro," we reported on Jan. 18, 1971, "began as part of the Bay of Pigs operation. The intent was to eliminate the Cuban dictator before the motley invaders landed on the island. Their arrival was expected to touch off a general uprising, which the Communist militia would have had more trouble putting down without the charismatic Castro to lead them."

Yet even after the Bay of Pigs, we reported, assassination teams continued to try to eliminate Castro until the end of February, 1963. "Nine months later," we noted, "President Kennedy was gunned down in Dallas by Lee Harvey Oswald, a fanatic who previously had agitated for Castro in New Orleans and had made a mysterious trip to the Cuban Embassy in Mexico City."

Among those privy to the CIA conspiracy, there is still a nagging suspicion — unsupported by the Warren Commission's findings — that Castro became aware of the U.S. plot upon his life and somehow recruited Oswald to retaliate against President Kennedy.

The Senate committee is investigating also this intriguing possibility that the CIA attempt to kill Castro may have backfired against President Kennedy in Dallas.

No less than the late President's brother, Robert, and successor, Lyndon Johnson, were deeply conscious of this unproved possibility.

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CIA/04 McCone

ORGINAL CIA

CASTRO, Fidel

CIA/01 ASSASSINATION